Pakistan, China set to ink MoUs in 10 agri-sectors

• Over 300 local, Chinese firms attend investment summit • PM says agriculture can be transformed 'within months' with Beijing's support

By Amin Ahmed

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and China are set to sign multiple memorandums of understanding (MoUs) for private-sector joint venture investments worth millions of dollars across 10 key sectors of agriculture, it emerged from the Pakistan-China Agricultural Investment Conference held in Islamabad on Monday.

The sectors in which agreements are expected to be signed include agriculture, food processing, livestock, fisheries, agri-inputs, farm machinery, renewable energy, logistics, technology and value-added exports.

The conference drew strong participation from the private sectors of both countries, with 119 companies from China and 191 companies from Pakistan in attendance, reflecting growing bilateral commercial interest.

Agriculture has been officially elevated as a priority area of cooperation under the second phase of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

The 10 priority sub-sectors identified for investment include agro-chemicals and inputs, agricultural machinery and solutions, food processing and value addition, meat and poultry, dairy inputs and processed products, fruits and vegetables, animal feed and related value chains, fisheries and aquaculture, cold chain systems and agricultural produce logistics, and food-grade packaging materials and equipment.

Making a comprehensive presentation on Pakistan's agriculture sector, the Ministry of National Food Security and Research stated that it plans to sign more than 25 sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) and export protocols with key trading partners, including China, in 2026.

Pakistan's agricultural landscape reflects a challenging paradox: despite fertile land, low labour costs and a large domestic market, the country faces an estimated productivity gap of $95 billion due to low technology penetration and inadequate infrastructure.

Addressing the conference, Minister for National Food Security and Research Rana Tanveer Hussain said the ministry was fully committed to supporting Chinese investors, from facilitating regulatory processes to ensuring seamless coordination with all relevant government departments and institutions.

He said the government's objective was not merely to attract investment, but to make Pakistan a destination where Chinese enterprises could grow, innovate and succeed alongside Pakistani partners.

Addressing the conference, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said Pakistan, being an agrarian economy, held immense and largely untapped potential in agriculture and could transform the sector not in years, but in months, by adopting modern technologies, improving productivity and strengthening cooperation with China.

He underlined the importance of deciding what to grow and export, developing value chains, cold storage and warehousing, and promoting value addition to make Pakistani produce globally competitive. The PM praised China's achievements in agriculture, information technology, artificial intelligence, manufacturing efficiency and export competitiveness. He said Pakistan must aim to generate an agricultural trade surplus through higher yields, competitive costs and superior quality, with support from Chinese experts.

JI warns against hasty decision on joining Gaza peace board

By Aamir Yasin

RAWALPINDI: Jamaat-i-Islami deputy emir Liaquat Baloch has cautioned the federal government against making hasty decisions about the Gaza Board of Peace, emphasising that Pakistan must not 'blindly plunge' into the initiative without a thorough assessment of its implications and the broader geopolitical landscape.

Speaking at a press conference at JI offices in Rawalpindi, Mr Baloch said that US president has adopted an unacceptable approach which has threatened the world peace.

JI's Rawalpindi emir Syed Arif Shirazi, district general secretary Usman Akash, Naib Umra and other leaders accompanied him.

"Palestine belongs to Palestinians, we stand in solidarity with them and condemn the US aggressive approach. If the issue of Palestine and Kashmir is resolved, the world will come on the path of peace," he said.

Referring to fire tragedy of Gul Plaza in Karachi, Mr Baloch expressed sorrow and offered condolences to families affected and asked the federal and provincial governments to compensate for these losses and form an impartial fact-finding commission about the tragedy to find out whose negligence caused this.

The JI leader also discussed PTI's planned Feb 8 protest and said that the protest is PTI's constitutional right as an opposition party. Mr Baloch also spoke about Punjab Local Government Act and said the people have termed it a black law.

"If there is anything related to raising the age of voters to 25, the matter should be discussed in the parliament," he said, adding that unfortunately, in Punjab, an unauthorised local government system has been imposed on the people as the PML-N government is not ready to give power to the people.

Achakzai offers olive branch

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opposition would give the government a tough time if there were attempts to make parliament weaker.

He also proposed measures to reduce political tensions to pave the way for dialogue, saying that the government should release political prisoners, including Imran Khan. "If you do not release Imran Khan, then at least allow his sisters to meet him without any restrictions in jail," he said during his speech, parts of which were not aired.

The PkMAP leader also dismissed reports that his appointment as the NA opposition leader was endorsed by the PML-N president, Nawaz Sharif. "I never asked anyone for any favour or positions," he claimed.

Mr Achakzai called for the equitable distribution of resources and said resources should be shared first with the locals. "If something is obtained from Sindh, it should be given to its people first, and this formula should be applied in all provinces," he added.

He said people in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan were being killed every day and the sanctity of four walls was being violated. "The situation can be controlled with the distribution of resources and basic rights," he added.

He also urged the government not to send its forces to Palestine to allegedly "fight against Hamas" and called for bringing the matter to parliament. "Bring this issue to parliament, we will rescue you by rejecting any such decision," he added. He stressed the need for holding an international moot on Afghanistan, saying severing trade links with Afghanistan had harmed the national economy.

Speaking on the occasion, PPP leader Ijaz Jakhrani took exception to the remarks by the NA leader of the opposition, in which he termed the opposition members as 'legitimate MNAs'. "We (treasury benchers) also came here with people's mandate," he added. He said four years ago, the PPP chairperson offered then-prime minister Imran Khan a dialogue, which Mr Khan rejected with disdain.

PML-N leader Tariq Fazal Chaudhry said the government would sit with the opposition for dialogue on national issues. "We are ready for serious talks, but first stop mudslinging," he added.

The NA also passed four bills on Monday, while five others were introduced before the house.

Ext. No. 08

IN THE COURT OF FAMILY JUDGE & J.M. THATTA
(Before: Mr. Muqtader Ali Khan G&W Appln No. 01 of 2026

Mst Dr. Afsheen D/O Mian Muhammad Awan. b/c Awan, Muslim Adult r/o Shuker-illahi Muhalla ward No. 04, Thatta town, Taluka and District Thatta .....Applicant

VERSUS

Kashif Ihsan-ul-Haq s/o Ihsan-ul-Haq B/c, Janjua Muslim, Adult, Origionally r/o SIC Muhafiz Town, Faisal Abad road District Sarghoda, Province of Punjab. Now at present resident of 17 KLOSTERSTRASSE, ZEHDENICK 16792, GERMANY, Cell No.004917631528601 ..... Respondent

PUBLICATION NOTICE

The above named plaintiff has filed a **"Appln U/S 7, of G & W Act 1890"** through her counsel, against you (above named defendant) before this court.

You are therefore, hereby given Notice/Summons through this publication in daily news paper **"Dawn International Newspaper"** to appear before this court on **26.01.2026 at 8:30 a.m** personally or through your advocate or any legally authorized person and file your written statement if any, else in case of you failure the above matter will be heard and decided in your absence ex-parte.

Given under my hand and the seal of the court,
Dated this 10th day of January, 2026.

By ..... Order
(Shahzef Memon)
Reader
Family Court, Thatta
No. FJ&JM/- 17 of 2026, Thatta
Dated: 10.01.2026

Forwarded with complements to the Advertisement Manager daily Newspaper **"Dawn International Newspaper"** for publication in next issue after getting the publication charges from the applicant and also sent a copy of publication to this court for record.

By ..... Order
(Shahzef Memon)
Reader
Family Court, Thatta

PAF contingent in Saudi Arabia for combat exercise

Dawn Report

F-16 Block-52 fighters are seen on the tarmac during the Spears of Victory 2026 exercise. —X/modgovksa

ISLAMABAD: A contingent of Pakistan Air Force (PAF) arrived in Saudi Arabia to take part in a multinational aerial combat exercise, the military's media affairs wing said on Monday.

The PAF contingent, comprising F-16 Block-52 fighter aircraft alongside dedicated air and ground crew, arrived at King Abdulaziz Air Base to participate in the exercise 'Spears of Victory 2026'.

"The exercise is witnessing the participation of fighter jets and combat support elements from Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, France, Italy, Greece, Qatar, Bahrain, Jordan, the United Kingdom and the United States," the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said in a press release.

"It offers a robust platform to enhance interoperability, operational synergy, mutual understanding and capacity building among participating air forces, particularly in large force employment, night composite air operations, integrated ISR (Intelligence Surveillance Reconnaissance), and operations in advanced electronic warfare environments," it added.

Through participation in this multinational forum, PAF seeks to enhance interoperability with partner air forces and "validate its operational preparedness in a contested, technology-driven battle space".

The ISPR said the PAF fighter aircraft undertook a non-stop flight from their home base in Pakistan to Saudi Arabia, "demonstrating the long-range operational reach and expeditionary capabilities of Pakistan Air Force".

"During the conduct of the exercise, PAF pilots flying advanced F-16 Block-52 aircraft equipped with modern avionics and Beyond Visual Range capabilities will be pitched against air crew members of participating air forces operating a wide array of sophisticated combat aircraft," the ISPR added.

It said the participation of the PAF contingent in the exercise not only reflected its firm commitment to regional and international military cooperation, but also underscored its "professional excellence and proven capability to operate effectively in diverse and demanding operational environments alongside leading contemporary air forces".

Search for Gul Plaza victims

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and cross-matching.

At the site, Mohammed Shah, who was supervising the Pakistan Navy's fire brigade team, said the fire was under control but smoke was still emanating even after 48 hours because it was a "deep-seated" blaze. In technical terms, he said, it was known as a "DK" fire, indicating it would continue until the structure was reduced to ashes.

Rescue 1122 spokesperson Hassaan ul Haseeb Khan said flames were largely brought under control by Sunday night, which paved the way for the cooling process.

Additional Inspector General of Police in Karachi Azad Khan visited the site and told journalists that initial investigations had not found evidence of arson. He said an FIR would be lodged against responsible persons or officials if the administration's report established negligence.

Meanwhile, affected shopkeepers staged a protest at the site on Monday evening, carrying banners and demanding compensation for traders and the heirs of victims.

Sindh CM announces relief

Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah announced a relief, inquiry and fire-safety reform package, saying the government would support both bereaved families and affected shopkeepers.

Addressing a press conference at the CM House alongside business and trade leaders, including Muhammad Jawed Bilwani and others, and senior officials, including provincial ministers Nasir Shah and Saeed Ghani, Karachi Mayor Murtaza Wahab, Karachi Commissioner Hassan Naqvi and DC South Javed Khoso, the chief minister said the fire broke out at around 10:15pm on Saturday.

He said the cause had not yet been determined, though preliminary assessments suggested a possible short circuit.

CM Shah said 24 fire brigade vehicles, 10 water bowsers and four snorkel vehicles were deployed, with around 100 firefighters from the KMC and another 100 from Rescue 1122 participating. He said about 10 per cent of the fire was still smouldering and access inside the building remained difficult due to structural constraints.

He announced that the family of each deceased victim would receive Rs10 million in compensation. He also promised assistance for the shopkeepers, saying a special committee had been constituted to help those affected.

Announcing a formal investigation, Murad Ali Shah said a committee headed by the Karachi commissioner had been formed to probe the causes of the fire, with the Additional IG Karachi assisting the inquiry. He added that assistance from the Forensic Laboratory Lahore had also been sought.

The chief minister announced the immediate implementation of the Fire Safety Audit 2024, which had reviewed 145 buildings. He said both the government and traders would have to fulfil their respective responsibilities to prevent future tragedies.

Debate in Senate, NA

The tragedy also came under discussion in the Senate, where members offered condolences and criticised the provincial administration, while others urged restraint.

PTI parliamentary leader Barrister Syed Ali Zafar said recurring disasters were rooted in systemic corruption within departments responsible for regulating buildings, not only in Karachi but across Pakistan.

He said building by-laws existed to address fires, earthquakes and other emergencies but were routinely bypassed, alleging that a building mafia, in collusion with officials, violated approvals and ignored safety requirements.

PPP parliamentary leader Sherry Rehman said there was no need to politicise the incident, calling it a lesson for all. She said no compensation could make up for lives lost but noted that the chief minister had announced Rs10m for affected families.

She acknowledged that the fire brigade took time to reach the site due to the crowd, stressing that fire safety was essential for Karachi.

"Shutting down private enterprise is harmful since this is such a big plaza. But fire safety is necessary for a city like Karachi and one should ask the administration of Gul Plaza about how it happened since they run the market," she said.

"It was a big and tragic incident but there is no need for pointing fingers or engaging in politics," she said. "Our doors are open for both relief and criticism."

MQM Senator Khalida Ateeb blamed the Sindh government for negligence, saying there were no safety or emergency measures at Gul Plaza and questioning how 1,200 shops could operate in a space "that allows only 500".

Meanwhile, the National Assembly was informed on Monday that more than 8,000 people had been rendered jobless after around 1,200 shops were destroyed in the devastating fire.

Raising the issue on a calling attention notice, MNA Arshad Abdullah Vohra of the Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) said traders of the market had been paying billions of rupees in taxes to the federal government for over 30 years but were now facing financial ruin and urgently needed state support.

"They have lost everything," he said, urging both the federal and Sindh governments to provide comprehensive relief to the affected families.

Iftikhar A. Khan and Syed Irfan Raza in Islamabad also contributed to this report

PTI will attend JCP meetings

Continued from Page 1

changed after the 27th Amendment and the establishment of the Federal Constitutional Court (FCC). He said the party, despite concerns over the 26th Amendment, shared its input in the selection of superior judges, but then routine meetings with Mr Khan were barred. He said they had decided to stay away from the JCP meetings as they were already boycotting the committee meetings, adding that a final decision about the JCP could only be made after consultations with Imran Khan.

Referring to the claims by the JUI-F that the notification of Mehmood Khan Achakzai as the National Assembly opposition leader was issued at the behest of PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif, Barrister Gohar said that, according to his understanding, it was the discretion of Speaker Ayaz Sadiq to issue the notification. The PTI was already making efforts for the early appointment of the opposition leader, but it was still great whoever did it, he said. "I understand that it was done by the speaker for which we are grateful," he observed.

To another question about the appointment of the opposition leader in the Senate, Barrister Gohar said that they had been told that the notification of the opposition leader in the Senate would be issued in a few days. He said PTI had already filed its nomination before the Senate Secretariat, which was complete in all aspects.

"Since the PTI founder has already nominated leaders of the opposition in both houses, it will be better if they are appointed soon," he said.

In October 2025, PTI had nominated Mr Achakzai and Allama Raja Nasir Abbas as its candidates for the slots of leader of the opposition in the National Assembly and Senate, respectively.

Highway accident claims four lives

By Abdul Wahid Shahwani

QUETTA: Four people were killed and several others injured in a road accident on Monday near the Wadh area of Khuzdar district on the Quetta-Karachi National Highway, police said.

The collision occurred when a Toyota Fielder car, travelling from Quetta to Karachi, struck a Quetta-bound passenger coach coming from Karachi head-on.

According to authorities, the accident resulted in the immediate deaths of four individuals in the Fielder, while many bus passengers sustained injuries.

"The driver of the Karachi-to-Quetta passenger coach lost control as he attempted to avoid an oncoming motorcycle," police said. "This led to a violent collision with the Fielder car approaching from the opposite direction."

The impact wrecked the Fielder entirely and the motorcycle rider also suffered injuries.

Two of the deceased have been identified: Aziz Ahmed, son of Muhammad Khan, and Abdul Karim, son of Khan Muhammad, both residents of Mari Abad, Quetta. The identity of the third deceased person remains unconfirmed.

Railway track blown up

By Ali Jan Mangi

DERA MURAD JAMALI: Train link between Quetta and the rest of the county was suspended for a few hours on Monday as unknown armed men blew up the main railway track near Dera Murad Jamali.

Police said some unknown people planted an explosive device at the main railway track in Dera Murad Jamali area of Nasirabad district in the morning and detonated it.

"Around two-foot-long portion of the track was blown up, suspending rail service," police officials said, adding that soon after the blast, police and personnel of law-enforcement agencies reached the area and started investigation.

They said the explosive device was detonated with a remote control and around three kilogrammes of explosive was used in the blast.

Sha'aban begins tomorrow

ISLAMABAD: Central Ruet-i-Hilal Committee Chairman Maulana Abdul Khabeer Azad announced on Monday that the crescent for Sha'aban 1447 Hijri was not sighted, and the month will therefore commence on Wednesday (Jan 21).

The Ruet body convened in Islamabad in the evening to consider evidence regarding the sighting of the crescent. The meeting was presided over by Maulana Azad.

The Ministry of Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony later issued a notification confirming that the crescent of Sha'aban was not sighted anywhere in the country. —APP

EIA REPORT
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

1. This notice is published for the information of all stakeholders and general public that **EPA-Punjab** has admitted the application of following project to accord Environmental Approval required under Section-12 of the PEPA, 1997 (Amended 2012).

Name of Project	Location	District
Oil & Gas Drilling Activities in Missakeswal D&PL	Well Missakeswal-05 (Tehsil Gujar Khan)	Rawalpindi

2. All stakeholders and general public are invited to submit their comments for/ or against the grant of Environmental Approval. The comments may be submitted to Director (EIA), EPA, Punjab, National Hockey Stadium (Qaddafi Stadium), Ferozepur Road, Lahore within a period of 7-days from the date of publication of this notice. Copy of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) report submitted by proponent of the project is available at following locations for review of stakeholders / general public:

i. Business Facilitation Centre, Ground Floor, Alfalah Building, The Mall, Lahore.
ii. O/o Deputy Director (EIA), National Hockey Stadium (Qaddafi Stadium), Lahore.
iii. Official Website of EPCCD Punjab (epd.punjab.gov.pk).

3. The Public Hearing will be conducted as per following Schedule:

Date	Day	Time	Venue
27-01-2026	Tuesday	1100 hrs	Taj Restaurant and Waheed Banquet Halls, GT Road, Gujar Khan

4. All stakeholders and general public are invited to attend the hearing proceedings to share their comments/ proposal/ concerns/ suggestions on the project or its EIA.

DIRECTOR GENERAL
Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
National Hockey Stadium (Qaddafi Stadium), Ferozepur Road, Lahore.
Ph: 042-99232230
Fax: 042-99232236

OIL & GAS DEVELOPMENT COMPANY LIMITED (OGDC)
OGDC Headquarter, Jinnah Avenue, Blue Area, Islamabad (44000) Pakistan.
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